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*Liberty Documents, with Contemporary Exposition and Critical Comments drawn from Various Writers.* Selected and prepared by MABEL HILL; edited with an introduction by A. B. HART. (New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1901. Pp. xxviii, 458.)

SCIENTIFIC teaching demands that the student be brought into as close touch as possible with the subject-matter under discussion. In botany, for example, plants, not books, are essential. In harmony with this conception it is now an almost universally accepted principle that in historical study the pupil should be brought into direct contact with the original records of the events under consideration. Since it is ordinarily not feasible to put the student into touch with all the records of any event—to say nothing of all the records of all history—it becomes necessary to make collections of representative or typical documents or material. These collections may be prepared either to supplement the ordinary narrative text, or to take the place of the narrative itself as a class text. Nearly all the existing source collections have been prepared with the former purpose in view. Miss Hill in her *Liberty Documents* has evidently attempted the latter and more difficult problem. Her selections have been made to illustrate a single idea—the growth or evolution of constitutional history among English speaking peoples. To this end she has selected the whole, or the essential portions, of thirty-one documents arranged in twenty-five chapters. Choice has been made only of well-known and relatively easily accessible documents. The work, therefore, must be judged, not from its subject-matter, but from the idea or plan of use and arrangement. On the whole Miss Hill's examples are typical; so from this point of view it leaves little for criticism. Perhaps the limit she placed on herself by deciding to use only documents in the English language was unwise; for it cuts out all material of the French Revolutionary era. But as the line had to be drawn somewhere, it reduces itself to a matter of judgment; and after making all allowances for differences of judgment, it may still be affirmed without hesitation that the student who masters this book has a broad foundation laid for both historical research and good citizenship.

An endeavor has also been made to trace the historical evolution of the documents cited by introducing one or more contemporaneous expositions and a few extracts from the best later or modern commentators. The student thus has the document, contemporaneous exposition, and modern comment before him for each study. It is perhaps here that Miss Hill has introduced the most original feature of her work, and to a considerable extent it will be upon this feature that her book will be judged; for the brief introduction to each chapter, the marginal analyses, and the general suggestions are not essentially different from those of other works. The salient points of her plan, *viz.*, selecting a single idea or principle, and developing it by adding extracts, the writer believes to be valuable in her application of them and in their suggestiveness. It goes without saying that no final or complete study of such a

topic as Miss Hill has chosen could be made from the material given, or from any material that could be given, in the space assigned ; but it is believed that the high-school boy who masters this book will have a far better, and at the same time a more comprehensive, knowledge of the evolution of constitutional liberty than he can get—or at least is likely to get—from any other book or method of study. In short, history teachers owe to Miss Hill their good-will for this study, and to the publishers their hearty thanks for the excellent mechanical execution of the volume.

HOWARD W. CALDWELL.

*The Thirteen Colonies.* By HELEN AINSLEE SMITH. (New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1901. Two Vols., pp. xii, 442 ; viii, 510.)

MISS SMITH announces in her preface that " This work has been prepared with the purpose of telling ' The Story of the Thirteen Colonies ' in a manner to meet the requirements rather of the general reader than of the special student." In so doing she follows the general plan of the series to which the volumes under review belong. The author has chosen the novel method of treating the colonies as thirteen distinct units each of which has a separate history from the foundation of the colony to the Declaration of Independence, the result being that, excluding the first chapter on the age of discovery, the work consists of thirteen monographs bound together in the order of the settlement of colonies. This method of writing American colonial history is based upon the supposition that the points of difference among the several colonies were more important and fundamental than those of similarity. If this had been true the present essential unity of the American people would have been, if possible at all, even more difficult of attainment than our ancestors found it. Indeed, the chief defect of the work, Miss Smith's failure to convey clear ideas of the progressive movements and forces which led logically and inevitably to the union of the colonies in the American nation, is directly traceable to this plan of treatment. To the same reason is due the failure to treat adequately the relations between the colonies and England, especially in the first half of the eighteenth century, and the events they shared in common, such as the French and the Indian wars. In general the earlier and later periods are more satisfactorily treated than the middle period, where the narrative, in common with nearly all of our colonial histories, becomes hardly more than an account of the succession of provincial governors, most of whom were of little consequence. It is perhaps hardly fair to ask of the writer of a confessedly popular work adequate consideration of American history from 1691 to 1754, a time which has been in many of its most important features so notoriously slighted by the historians of the colonial era.

Governmental and institutional development does not receive satisfactory attention, as for instance in Maryland, where the importance of the land question is not sufficiently emphasized. Generalizations, some-